

**Project title: An Exploratory Qualitative Study of Parenting the Asperger Child**  
**Investigator: Jon Lasser**  
**Department: EAPS**

**Project summary:**

The core concept that emerged from the qualitative data, constructing normalcy, refers to both the parents' process of meaning-making as well and efforts to create adaptive outcomes for their children. Understood in a cultural context of socially constructed normalcy, the research participants' narratives illustrate a dynamic model of what it means to raise a child with Asperger's Disorder (AD). Parents reported that constructing normalcy was complicated by the fact that, unlike children with many other disabilities, children with AD often "appear normal" to outsiders until their behavior suggests otherwise. Parents experience critical moments in social settings that result in a second variety of normalcy construction. These critical moments, called normalcy incongruities, occur in social settings in which an individual that does not know the child with AD and assumes that he is non-disabled begins to notice the characteristics of the disability emerge. Parents of children with AD work hard to help their children be successful in home, school, and community settings. As parents look to the future, they work toward creating the means by which their child with AD can develop the skills needed to be successful in the "real world" after high school. While for some independent living is possible, others may have more significant support needs. Nevertheless, parents are mindful of their responsibility to construct normalcy for their child.

**Presentations:**

Lasser, J., Corley, K., Hicks, M., King, L., Bieltz, S. (2006). Parenting the Asperger Child: Results from a Qualitative Study. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association, New Orleans, Louisiana. [Division 16 does not accept paper presentations, and poster presentations are competitive]